

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

Kindly amend claims 14, 17, 21, 22 and 25 as shown below.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the

Application:

**Claims 1-13 (canceled)**

**Claim 14 (currently amended):** A method of fabricating a semiconductor device comprising:

forming a trench for isolation in said semiconductor substrate; and

forming an insulating film to cover said trench for relaxing an internal stress of said silicon substrate, wherein said insulating film ~~includes~~ comprises:

a first portion disposed to be opposed to a bottom of said trench, and

a second portion disposed to be opposed to a side of said trench, and

wherein a first thickness of said first portion throughout is different from a second thickness of said second portion throughout, and wherein the second thickness of said second portion is substantially uniform across the entirety of said second portion.

**Claim 15 (original):** The method according to claim 14, wherein said first thickness of said first portion is thinner than said second thickness of said second portion.

**Claim 16 (original):** The method according to claim 15, further comprising:

forming another insulating film in said trench, wherein said another insulating film exerts a compressive stress on said semiconductor substrate, and said insulating film exerts a tensile stress on said semiconductor substrate.

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**Claim 17 (currently amended):** The method according to claim 15, wherein said insulating film is formed of one selected from a group consisting of silicon nitride and silicon ~~oxinitride~~ oxynitride.

**Claim 18 (withdrawn):** A method for fabricating a semiconductor device comprising:  
forming a trench for isolation in a semiconductor substrate; and  
forming an insulating film to cover said trench for relaxing an internal stress of said silicon substrate, wherein said insulating film is opposed to a side of said trench and is not opposed to a bottom of said trench.

**Claim 19 (withdrawn):** The method according to claim 18, further comprising:  
forming another insulating film in said trench, wherein said another insulating film exerts a compressive stress on said semiconductor substrate, and said insulating film exerts a tensile stress on said semiconductor substrate.

**Claim 20 (withdrawn):** The method according to claim 18, wherein said insulating film is formed of one selected from a group consisting of silicon oxide and silicon oxinitride.

**Claim 21 (currently amended):** A method for fabricating a semiconductor device comprising:  
forming a trench for isolation in a semiconductor substrate;  
forming a silicon oxide film to cover said trench; and  
forming an insulating film on said silicon oxide film, wherein said insulating film exerts a tensile stress on said silicon substrate, and

wherein said insulating film ~~includes~~ comprises:

- a first portion disposed to be opposed to a bottom of said trench, and
- a second portion disposed to be opposed to a side of said trench, and

wherein a first thickness of said first portion throughout is thinner than a second thickness of said second portion throughout, and wherein the second thickness of said second portion is substantially uniform across the entirety of said second portion.

**Claim 22 (currently amended):** The method according to claim 21, wherein said insulating film is formed of one selected from a group consisting of silicon nitride and silicon ~~oxinitride~~ oxynitride.

**Claim 23 (withdrawn):** A method for fabricating a semiconductor device comprising:  
forming a trench for isolation in a semiconductor substrate;  
forming a silicon oxide film to cover said trench; and  
forming an insulating film on said silicon oxide film, wherein said insulating film is opposed to a side of said trench and is not opposed to a bottom of said trench.

**Claim 24 (withdrawn):** The method according to claim 23, wherein said insulating film is formed of one selected from a group consisting of silicon oxide and silicon oxinitride.

**Claim 25 (currently amended):** A method for fabricating a semiconductor device comprising:

forming a trench for isolation in a semiconductor substrate;  
forming a silicon oxide film to cover said trench; and  
forming an insulating film on said silicon oxide film, wherein said insulating film is formed of one selected from a group consisting of silicon nitride and silicon oxinitride, wherein said insulating film ~~includes~~ comprises:

a first portion disposed to be opposed to a bottom of said trench, and  
a second portion disposed to be opposed to a side of said trench, and

wherein a first thickness of said first portion throughout is different from a second thickness of said second portion throughout, and wherein the second thickness of said second portion is substantially uniform across the entirety of said second portion.

**Claim 26 (withdrawn):** A method for fabricating a semiconductor device comprising:  
forming a trench for isolation in a semiconductor substrate;  
forming a silicon oxide film to cover said trench; and  
forming an insulating film on said silicon oxide film, wherein said insulating film is formed of one selected from a group consisting of silicon nitride and silicon oxinitride, wherein said insulating film is opposed to a side of said trench and is not opposed to a bottom of said trench.

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